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XI.—THE RELATION OF SHAKESPEARE TO MONTAIGNE.

That Shakespeare read Montaigne's *Essays* is made probable by the fact that they were well-known to his contemporaries. He was only sixteen when the first two books were published in Paris. By the end of the century, before he had begun to write his greatest tragedies, the popularity of the work had already spread to England. Of this fact there still remain many signs: "Seven or eight of great wit and worth," Florio tells us,¹ had made attempts to translate the *Essays*; two separate entries of such a translation had been made in the Stationers' Register; "divers of his peeces" in English, Cornwallis writes, were going from hand to hand in manuscript; and Bacon had published *Essays*, in which not only the name, but several appropriations of thought, acknowledged and unacknowledged, show the indebtedness of their author to Montaigne. A little later, in 1603, the year of the first quarto of *Hamlet*, there was published with all the pomp of the day the translation of John Florio; and after four more years, Jonson, wishing to predict great popularity for Guarini, said:

"All our English writers,
I mean such as are happy in the Italian,
Will deign to steal out of this author, mainly,
Almost as much as from Montaignié."²

Even if Shakespeare had not been a widely curious observer, he must, merely as an intelligent man of the world, have been familiar with a book so generally popular.

To prove this, moreover, one piece of direct evidence has long been known. In 1671, Capell³ pointed out in the

¹ In his *To the courteous Reader*, prefixed to the first edition of his translation of the *Essays*, 1603.

² *Volpone*, Act III, sc. 2.

³ *Notes and Various Readings*, London, 1671, pt. iv, p. 63.

Essays a close parallel for the following description, from the *Tempest*, of an ideal commonwealth :

" I ' the commonwealth I would by contraries
 Execute all things; for no kind of traffic
 Would I admit; no name of magistrate;
 Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,
 And use of service, none; contract, succession,
 Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard, none;
 No use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil;
 No occupation: all men idle, all;
 And women too, but innocent and pure;
 No sovereignty."

(*Tempest*, II, 1, 148 ff.)

The parallel which Capell found for this passage is from the essay *Of the Caniballes*. Montaigne is describing, by the way, the blissful state of nature which he supposed was enjoyed by our American Indians :

" It is a nation, would I answer Plato, that hath no kinde of traffike, no knowledge of Letters, no intelligence of numbers, no name of magistrate, nor of politike superioritie; no use of service, of riches or of povertie; no contracts, no successions, no partitions, no occupation but idle; no respect of kindred, but common, no apparell but naturall; no manuring of lands; no use of wine, corne, or mettle."

(*Florio*, I, xxx, p. 94, Routledge edition.)

Shakespeare's indebtedness is of course clear; he has followed Montaigne almost phrase for phrase, changing each only just enough to suit it to the new context, and to fit it into the blank verse.

In spite of the probability created by so striking a case of indebtedness, it has been only within the last thirty years that the critics have taken up in earnest the problem of Shakespeare's relation to Montaigne. During these years several eager theories upon the subject have been advanced, and a number of passages in the *Essays* have been pointed out as the sources of certain more or less similar passages in the plays. Of the theories, that of Stedefeld, propounded

in 1871,¹ claims that Shakespeare, representing Montaigne in the character of Hamlet, writes his play as a protest against Montaigne's skepticism. The theory of Mr. Feis, published in 1884,² which also considers Hamlet as a representation of Montaigne, flatly contradicts that of Herr Stedefeld in the charge which it supposes Shakespeare to bring against the Frenchman; according to Mr. Feis, the accusation is, that he "preached the rights of nature whilst yet clinging to dogmatic tenets,"³ which, in words used elsewhere in the book, "have come from the narrow cells of a superstitious Christianity."⁴ A third theory, that advanced by Mr. Robertson in 1897,⁵ claims that all the greatness of Shakespeare, both in thought and in style, was due to the influence of Montaigne. Theories like these need no discussion.

When, however, we turn to the parallel passages that have been advanced both by Mr. Feis and Mr. Robinson in support of their theories, and also by Professor Elze⁶ and Mr. Henry Morley,⁷ we may find, among unimportant coincidences, several interesting cases of resemblance. Scarcely one of them, however, in its isolation, is sufficiently striking to prove the likeness other than accidental. It would take too long to consider them separately here; as we meet them in the process of our discussion, each will of course be credited to its discoverer.

The investigation of Shakespeare's relation to Montaigne is accordingly little more than begun. Far more parallels must be pointed out,—parallels convincing by their number, by their close correspondence, or by their grouping in the *Essays* and in the plays, before we can decide how well Shakespeare knew the *Essays*, and what relation, if any, he

¹ *Hamlet: ein Tendenzdrama Shakespeares [sic] gegen die skeptische und kosmopolitische Weltanschauung des Michael de Montaigne*, Berlin, 1871.

² Jacob Feis, *Shakspeare and Montaigne*, London, 1884.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 43.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 90.

⁵ *Montaigne and Shakspeare*, London, 1897.

⁶ Karl Elze, *Life of Shakespeare*, Berlin, 1872; and *Essays on Shakespeare*, 1872.

⁷ In preface to Routledge Florio.

bore to their author. These questions are not unimportant ones ; Shakespeare's relations to many of the other great men of the sixteenth century, from Rabelais to Marlowe, have been the subject of eager investigation ; and of all the men of that wonderful age, there is none,—not, perhaps, excepting even Shakespeare himself,—who has had a greater influence on the thought of other men than has Montaigne. Hallam says that the “school of Montaigne . . . embraces, in fact, a large proportion of French and English literature.”¹ It is important to know whether Shakespeare in any sense belonged to that school ; and if not, just what relation he does bear to ‘the earliest of French philosophers.’

In attempting to decide this question, the first thing to do is to remind ourselves what are the different elements and qualities by virtue of which this important book of essays has attracted so many men, and might therefore be expected to attract Shakespeare ; and what different relations it has, through these characteristics, established between these men and its author, and might therefore be supposed to have established for Shakespeare. The next step must be to collect and examine so many close parallels in the plays and the *Essays* as may prove that Shakespeare did really bear to Montaigne some appreciable relation. This part of the investigation must necessarily, because of the meagreness of our present data, be disproportionately long and minute. Finally, by comparing all these parallels, it may become possible to determine which, among the relations we find men to have borne to Montaigne, was that borne by Shakespeare.

Montaigne's *Essays*, at first reading, give the effect of being a succession of fresh observations concerning all things in heaven and earth. They present in modern and intelligible form the various doctrines of the ancient schools of philosophy. They collect interesting anecdotes, queer customs, and strange beliefs ; extracts from books new and old ; unhack-

¹ *Introduction to the Literature of Europe in the 15th, 16th, and 17th Centuries*, vol. II, ch. IV, sect. 1, § 6.

neyed statements about all the facts of every-day life,—about food, clothes, fashions,—and, especially, about the workings of the human mind. Their titles range from *Thumbs* to *The Worthiest and Most Excellent Men*. The observations made upon all these subjects are disconnected and fragmentary, but always acute, original, and suggestive. The inconsistency which is also characteristic of them, Mr. Owen makes very clear when he says: “Had he [Montaigne] been a dramatist, and assigned his manifold opinions to individual and appropriate characters, varying from a Roman Pontiff to a débauchée and from a Stoic philosopher to a low buffoon, what a large picture gallery we should have had!”¹ This, then, is the more obvious aspect of the *Essays*; they may appear, in the phrase of the time, as a “commonplace book,” as a collection of disconnected observations, each interesting and new, and therefore suitable for the free appropriation of those days. Considered in this way, Montaigne’s thoughts are valuable merely as shining fragments, to be used—consciously or unconsciously, with or without credit being given, it did not matter much,—to adorn the work of the first admirer. The relation of such an admirer to Montaigne, that of a canny reader using over again the material so lavishly displayed, was one very commonly borne toward Montaigne by Shakespeare’s contemporaries. It is plainly to this sort of indebtedness that Jonson referred when he spoke of “stealing mainly.” Bacon held this relation to Montaigne; so did others whose borrowings are not yet so well-known. To a dramatist we can see that the *Essays* might be especially serviceable as a treasury of dramatic points of view.

No one can read these *Essays* attentively, however, without soon finding out that they represent more than a wealth of useful detail; they are informed throughout by the personality of the author. It is because Montaigne was constantly but mildly curious, that his subjects are so varied, and change

¹ *The Skeptics of the French Renaissance*, London, 1893, p. 487.

so unexpectedly. It is because he took nothing as a matter of course, seeing time-honored customs and trite facts as if they had just come into existence, that his remarks on all subjects are so new and vital. And it is because he liked questioning more than answering, because he had that in him which Guillaume Guizot, taking him as usual a little too seriously, calls "*ce parti pris de tourner le manège pour ne point tirer d'eau*,"¹—that his various remarks about a subject are so indecisive and so irreconcilable. These three qualities,—universal curiosity, the power of putting to himself frank questions on all subjects, and an antipathy toward any persevering effort to solve these questions,—are the traits by virtue of which Montaigne has received his title of sceptic. By unconsciously imposing upon other minds the brilliant but unstable ideas naturally thrown out by a man of this type, and still more by passing on with his ideas, through a sort of contagion, his characteristic habits of thought, Montaigne has exerted his more widespread and powerful influence. The corresponding relation to him, that of disciple to master, is that which has been held by many of his countrymen, such as Charron, Descartes, and Pascal; it was that held for a time by Emerson.

The problem before us, then, is this: did Shakespeare use Montaigne's *Essays*, providing he can be shown to have used them at all, as an independent worker makes use of a mere storehouse of material; or, on the other hand, did he submit to the influence of Montaigne's sceptical doctrines and habits of thought, in such a way as to become in any sense his disciple?

Before we can discuss this question, it is necessary, as we have seen, to pile up many parallels on which to base our judgment. Let us consider first a group of passages in the *Essays*, each of which has a parallel in Shakespeare's plays. The essay in which they occur is called *That to Philosophise is to learn how to die*, and is chiefly made up of those adaptations from the classics which are so frequent in Montaigne. I shall

¹ *Montaigne : études et fragments*, Paris, 1899.

quote throughout from Florio's translation, not only because that was the one current in Shakespeare's time, but because, as Mr. Henry Morley has shown, it was actually the version from which Shakespeare appropriated the passage in the *Tempest*.¹ The paging refers to the Routledge edition. Rather more than half-way through the essay we find this sentence :

"Herein [i. e., in freedom from the fear of death] consists the true and soveraigne liberty, that affords us meanes wherewith to jeast and make a scorn of force and injustice, and to deride imprisonment, gives or fetters."

(*Florio*, I, XIX, p. 33.)

With this compare the following passage in "Julius Cæsar :"

"Cassius from bondage will deliver Cassius
Therein, ye gods, you make the weak most strong;
Therein, ye gods, you tyrants do defeat:
Nor stony tower, nor walls of beaten brass,
Nor airless dungeon, nor strong links of iron,
Can be retentive to the strength of spirit;
But life, being weary of these worldly bars,
Never lacks power to dismiss itself.
If I know this, know all the world besides,
That part of tyranny that I do bear,
I can shake off at pleasure."

(*Julius Cæsar*, I, 3, 90 ff.)

Of course the similarity here is not at all striking: nor is the thought novel; it is just what would naturally be ascribed to a Roman. Now read in the essay from the next sentence but one :

" . . . Since we are threatened by so many kinds of death, there is no more inconvenience² to feare them all, than to endure one: what matter when it commeth, since it is unavoidable?" (*Florio*, I, XIX, p. 33.)

In the second act of the play in which we found the first coincidence, Cæsar expresses the same idea as follows :

¹ For a discussion as to the version habitually used by Shakespeare, see Appendix A.

² This is a mistranslation for "*il n'y a pas plus de mal*"; but the right sense is easily perceived.

"Cowards die many times before their deaths;
 The valiant never taste of death but once.
 Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
 It seems to me most strange that men should fear;
 Seeing that death, a necessary end,
 Will come when it will come."

(*Julius Cæsar*, II, 2, 32 ff.)

There is a curious fact about this case of resemblance. The first part of each quotation is similar to a passage in a different connection in Plutarch's "*Life of Julius Cæsar*,"¹ from which Shakespeare was drawing material for his play, and with which Montaigne also was familiar. The common conclusion, however, is not in Plutarch. Now did Shakespeare and Montaigne each take Plutarch's thought and develop it independently in the same way? The little evidence we have so far discussed does not justify us in saying that this was not the case. Let us, however, look a little farther down the same page of the essay. We read :

"But nature compels us to it. Depart (saith she) out of this world, even as you came into it. The same way you came from death to life, returne without passion or amazement, from life to death . . ."; (*Florio*, I, xix, p. 33.)

And on the next page :

"It consisteth not in number of yeeres, but in your will, that you have lived long enough."

These two extracts together suggest Edgar's speech to Gloucester in *King Lear* :

"Men must endure
 Their going hence, even as their coming hither :
 Ripeness is all."

(*King Lear*, V, 2, 9 ff.)

Just before the sentence last quoted we find this passage :

"Moreover, no man dies before his houre. The time you leave behind was no more yours than that which was before your birth, and concerneth you no more. . . . Wheresoever your life ended, there is it all."

Mr. Feis² has pointed out that these two sentences, in con-

¹ See *Shakespeare's Plutarch*, London, 1875, p. 92.

² *Shakspere and Montaigne*, London, 1884, p. 111.

nection with the one last quoted from our essay, afford several points of resemblance to a speech in *Hamlet*:

"Not a whit, we defy augury: there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all; since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes?" (*Hamlet*, V, 2, 230 ff.)

"Since no man has aught of what he leaves" is the reading of the folio, to which some critics have objected on the ground that it is absurd, as all unite in considering the version of the quarto. The parallel from Montaigne makes the folio reading so clear as to render any attempt at emendation unnecessary. A fifth passage from this same essay, namely:

"Why fearest thou thy last day? He is no more guiltie, and conferreth no more to thy death, than any of the others. It is not the last step that causeth weariness; it only declares it. All daies march towards death, only the last comes to it." (*Florio*, I, xix, p. 35.)

has also a parallel in Shakespeare, this time, as twice before, in *Julius Cæsar*. It consists of Brutus' welcome to death:

"My bones would rest,
That have but labor'd to attain this hour."
(*Julius Cæsar*, V, 5, 41 f.)

In two and one-half pages of one essay, then, we have found five passages parallels to which exist in Shakespeare's plays. Three of these parallels, furthermore, occur in the same play, the other two in plays written in somewhere near the same period of Shakespeare's life. There is already some presumption that so many coincidences grouped in such a way are not purely accidental. These ideas, however, are neither vital nor characteristic parts of Montaigne's thought; but simply examples of his own numerous borrowings. If Shakespeare, as seems rather probable, appropriated them in his turn, whether or not he thereby accepted them as his own opinions is a question to be discussed later. In either case, he cannot be said to show himself under the influence of ideas

or habits of thought that were distinctly Montaigne's. At first thought the more natural supposition is that these passages may have served Shakespeare as illuminating expressions of the stoic attitude toward death which he wished his Romans to exemplify, and his Hamlet and Edgar to assume.

Another case of agreement between passages expressing similar classic reasoning about death may be given here. In an essay devoted chiefly to a discussion of suicide, Montaigne says :

"The common course of curing any infirmitie is ever directed at the charge of life: we have incisions made into us, we are cauterized, we have limbes cut and mangled, we are let blood, we are dieted. Goe we but one step further, we need no more physicke, we are perfectly whole. Why is not our jugular or throat veine as much at our command as the mediane? To extreme sicknesses, extreme remedies. . . . God giveth us sufficient privilege, when he placeth us in such an estate, as life is worse than death unto us." (*Florio*, II, III, p. 174.)

A parallel is found in Rodrigo's despairing words to Iago :

"It is silli ess to live when to live is torment; and then have we a prescription to die when death is our physician." (*Othello*, I, 2, 338 ff.)

This conception of death as a physician is strangely combined with the conception already noticed of death as a release from captivity, in the following passage from *Cymbeline* :

". . . Be cured
By the sure physician, death, who is the key
To unbar these locks."

(*Cymbeline*, V, 4, 6 ff.)

Another of Montaigne's classical ideas which can be paralleled in the plays, is the one frankly borrowed in the following extract :

"Plutarke saith in some place that 'he findes no such great difference betweene beast and beast, as he findeth diversitie between man and man.'"
(*Florio*, I, XLII, p. 128.)

The passage in Plutarch to which Montaigne refers is found in the essay *The Beasts have the use of Reason*,¹ which is naturally

¹ See *Plutarch's Morals*, ed. W. W. Goodwin, Boston, 1870, vol. 5, p. 233.

not a part of the North's translation of Plutarch's Lives with which Shakespeare was familiar. It is to Montaigne then, if to either writer, that Shakespeare is indebted when he makes Macbeth say :

" Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men ;
As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Sloughs, water-rugs and demi-wolves are clept
All by the name of dogs. . . . "

(*Macbeth*, III, 1, 92 ff.)

Other passages in Shakespeare that express thoughts found in the *Essays*, but not thoughts characteristic of Montaigne, are certain remarks which express the stoical ideal of endurance. Take Brutus' speech concerning his wife's death :

" Why, farewell, Portia. We must die, Messala :
With meditating that she must die once,
I have the patience to endure it now."

(*Julius Cæsar*, IV, 3, 190 ff.)

This is a practical application of the ideal implied in these two passages found on successive pages of the essay *Of Solitariness* :

" Our death is not sufficient to make us afraid ; let us also charge ourselves with that of our wives, of our children, and of our friends and people." (*Florio*, I, xxxviii, p. 110.)

" It sufficeth me, under fortunes favour, to prepare myselfe for her disfavour ; and being at ease, as far as imagination may attaine unto, so represent the evill to come unto myselfe : Even as we enure our selves to Tilts and Tourneyes, and counterfeit warre in time of peace." (*Florio*, I, xxxviii, p. 111.)

Compare again the reproach made to Brutus by Cassius, who is ignorant of the bad news :

" Of your philosophy you make no use,
If you give place to accidental evils,—"

(*Julius Cæsar*, IV, 3, 145 f.)

with the following characterization of a philosopher from the *Essays* :

"But forso much as he [Solon] is a Philosopher, with whom the favours or disfavours of fortune, and good or ill lucke have no place, and are not regarded by him; and puissances and greatneses, and accidents of qualitie, are well-nigh indifferent:" (*Florio*, I, xviii, p. 26.)

Still again, read Leonato's words when rebuked for his grief over Hero:

"For there was never yet philosopher
That could endure the tooth-ache patiently,
However they have writ the style of gods
And made a push at chance and sufferance;"
(*Much Ado About Nothing*, V, 1, 35 ff.)

and then read the following passage by Montaigne:

" . . . The sense of feeling . . . which by the effect of the griefe or paine it brings to the body doth so often confound and re-enverse all these goodly Stoicall resolutions, and enforceth to cry out of the belly-ache him who hath with all his resolution established in his mind this doctrine, that the cholike, as every other sicknesse or paine, is a thing indifferent, wanting power to abate anything of soveraigne good or chiefe felicity, wherein the wise man is placed by his owne vertue." (*Florio*, II, xii, p. 304.)

The similarity, being in each case of substance only, and not being in any instance unique and striking, simply makes it conceivable that the ideas may have been suggested by a general remembrance of such passages in the *Essays*. In each case, moreover, any indebtedness to Montaigne is again for transmitted material only; and, as before, we may easily consider that Shakespeare is indebted merely for serviceable dramatic points of view. Such are the words of Stoics; Shakespeare wishes to reproduce the talk of Stoics; and it may well be in this sense that we accept, if at all, the hypothesis that he is indebted to Montaigne.

Let us now turn to cases of resemblance where the subject matter consists of thoughts more characteristic of Montaigne's peculiar doctrines and tendencies of mind. His power of seeing well-known things as new and wonderful, and his fancy for unlimited questioning without attempts at conclusive answers, had for one field of exercise the world of nature. He often expresses his disdain of

" . . . a rabble of men that are ordinarie interpreters and controulers of God's secret desseignes, presuming to finde out the causes of every accident, and to prie into the secrets of Gods divine will, the incomprehensible motives of his works." (*Florio*, I, xxi, p. 99.)

In Lear's plans for his life with Cordelia in prison, we find the same thought, where he declares that they will

"take upon's the mystery of things,
As if we were God's spies."

(*King Lear*, V, 3, 16 f.)

The resemblance was pointed out by Mr. Robertson.¹ A similar idea is also common in Montaigne,—that is, that

"Wee neede not goe to cuil out miracles, and chuse strange difficulties: mee seemeth, that amongst those things we ordinarily see there are such incomprehensible rarities as they exceed all difficulty of miracles." (*Florio*, II, xxxvii, p. 388.)

This thought, combined with the one just spoken of, is also found in a passage from *All's Well that Ends Well*.

"They say miracles are past; and we have our philosophical persons, to make modern and familiar, things supernatural and causeless. Hence is it that we make trifles of terrors, ensconcing ourselves into seeming knowledge, when we should submit ourselves to an unknown fear." (*All's Well that Ends Well*, II, 3, 1 ff.)

In these cases it is rather the thought than the expression, rather a conception frequently expressed in the *Essays* than these precise extracts, that we may conceive Shakespeare to have followed. In the case of two closely associated passages in *Hamlet*, on the contrary, we are perhaps justified in assigning a more definite source. One is the end of Hamlet's speech to his father's ghost, where he talks of the spirit as

"Making night hideous; and we fools of nature
So horridly to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls; "

(*Hamlet*, I, 4, 54 ff.)

the other consists of these well-known lines :

¹ *Montaigne and Shakespeare*, p. 66.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."
(*Hamlet*, I, 5, 166 f.)

Now this latter passage might well sum up an essay called *It is follie to referre Truth or Falsehood to our sufficiencie*. In this essay, moreover, we find a passage parallel to the former quotation. Montaigne says he once felt a "kinde of compassion" when

"I heard anybody speake, either of *ghosts walking*, of fortelling future things, of enchantments, of witchcrafts, or of any other thing reported which I could not well conceive, or that was *beyond my reach*. . . . Reason hath taught me, that so resolutely to condemne a thing for false and impossible, is to assume unto himselfe the advantage, to have the bounds and limits of Gods will, and of the power of our common mother Nature tied to his sleeve. . . . We must judge of this infinite power of nature, with more reverence, and mere acknowledgement of our owne ignorance and weakness." (*Florio*, I, xxvi, p. 80.)¹

Beside noticing the coincidences of grouping in each author and of general likeness of thought, we should observe that the essay speaks of marvellous things, including ghosts, as "beyond my reach," thus using the same figure as Hamlet when he says "beyond the reaches of our souls." It is interesting to notice that this expression is not in the French, which reads *où je ne peusse pas mordre*. If, then, Shakespeare borrowed these passages, as seems probable, he borrowed them, as he did the passage in the *Tempest*, not from the original French, but from the translation of Florio.

The same qualities of mind which Montaigne carried to his observation of nature, are plain in what he says about human life. He delights in pointing out its incomprehensibility. He likes to show the inconsistency of man's thinking and doing, the untrustworthiness of his perceptions, the lack of logic and of stability in his institutions. His conclusion from it all, if such a man may be said to have a conclusion, is the vanity of man's estimate of himself, and of his own place in creation. He writes, for example :

¹ The italics are mine.

"Is it possible to imagine anything so ridiculous as this miserable and wretched creature, which is not so much as master of himself, exposed and subject to offences of all things, and yet dareth call himself Master and Emperour of this Universe?" (*Florio*, II, XII, p. 225.)

The whole essay from which this extract is taken,—the longest and most nearly systematic essay of them all,—as well as many passages in other essays, repeats and enforces this thought. We may remember that the same idea was expressed, though in a different spirit from the detached observer's attitude of Montaigne, by Isabella in *Measure for Measure*.

"But man, proud man,
Dressed in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he's most assured,
His glassy essence, like an angry ape,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
As make the angels weep."

(*Measure for Measure*, II, 2, 117.)

In the same play, the ghostly counsel which the Duke in his disguise as friar gives to the condemned Claudio, seems to collect many of Montaigne's remarks upon the paradoxical and unsatisfactory nature of human existence. For some of the charges against life parallels can be pointed out in the *Apologie of Raymond Sebonde*, the essay just quoted from; and in several cases parallels occur within a few pages of each other. The Duke, after his introduction,

"Reason thus with life:
If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing
That none but fools would keep,"

(*Measure for Measure*, III, 1, 5 ff.)

gives as his first objection to human existence the subjection of man to the astrological influences of the stars:

"A breath thou art,
Servile to all the skyey influences,
That dost this habitation where thou keep'st,
Hourly afflict."

In the *Apologie*, on the same page on which occurs the extract quoted above, we find the same argument advanced to prove a similar contention :

"To consider the power of domination these bodies have not onely upon our lives and condition of our fortune But also over our dispositions and inclinations, our discourses and wils, which they rule, provoke, and move at the pleasure of their influences, as our reason finds and teacheth us. . . . Seeing that not a man alone nor a king only, but monarchies and empires; yea, and all the world below is moved at the shaking of one of the least heavenly motions. . . . We, who have no commerce but of obedience with them?"

(*Florio*, II, XII, p. 225 f.)

Both the Duke and Montaigne, however, express a platitude of mediæval astrology; and accordingly the coincidence, if solitary, would count for little. The Duke's second charge is this:

"Merely, thou art death's fool;
For him thou labor'st by thy flight to shun,
And yet runn'st toward him still."

This passage might have been adduced as a sixth parallel to passages in the nineteenth essay of the first book. For the thought, though common with Montaigne, is nowhere, perhaps, expressed more fully or with more reiteration than in that essay. Several sentences from it have been suggested by Mr. Robertson,¹ among other passages, as affording the suggestion for the Duke's argument. No one extract, however, could be assigned, even tentatively, as the definite origin, if we could not find in that essay, closely associated with the other passages already quoted from it, the following sentences:

"The end of our carriere is death; it is the necessarie object of our aime: if it affright us, how is it possible we should step one foot further without an ague?" (*Florio*, I, XIX, p. 28). . . . "To what end recoile you from it, if you cannot goe backe." *Ibid.*, p. 35.

The Duke gives as his next argument:

"Thou art not noble;
For all the accommodations that thou bearest
Are nurst by baseness."

¹ *Montaigne and Shakspeare*, p. 52.

This, again, is a thought often expressed by Montaigne. Let us read an expression of it that occurs in the *Apologie of Raymond Sebonde* from which we have twice quoted before :

“ . . . No eminent or glorious vertue can be without some immoderate and irregular agitation. May not this be one of the reasons which moved the Epicureans to discharge God of all care and thought of our affaires : forsomuch as the very effects of his goodnesse cannot exercise themselves towards us without disturbing his rest by meanes of the passions which are as motives and solicitations directing the soule to vertuous actions ? ” (*Florio*, II, XII, p. 290).

The next two arguments :

“ Thou art by no means valiant ;
For thou dost fear the soft and tender fork
Of a poor worm. Thy best of rest is sleep,
And that thou oft provokest ; yet grossly fear’st
Thy death, which is no more,—”

are so trite that we need not consider Montaigne’s frequent repetition of the ideas. The objection following, on the contrary,

“ Thou art not thyself ;
For thou exist’st on many a thousand grains
That issue out of dust,—”

is far from trite ; and it seems even less so when its meaning becomes more clear on comparison with another passage in the *Apologie* :

“ Is it our senses that lend these diverse conditions unto subjects, when for all that the subjects have but one ? as we see in the Bread we eat : it is but Bread, but one using it, it maketh bones, blood, flesh, haire, and nailes thereof.” (*Florio*, II, XII, p. 308.)

Without stopping to discuss the possible influence on modern philosophy of this passage, let us read the next charge of the Duke against human existence :

“ Happy thou art not ;
For what thou hast not, still thou strivest to get,
And what thou hast, forget’st.”

The same thought had been expressed by Montaigne not many

pages after the last extract we have read, though in a different essay :

"Our appetite doth contemne and passe over what he hath in his free choice and owne possession, to runne after and pursue what he hath not." (*Florio*, II, xiv, p. 315.)

The Duke's next argument :

"Thou art not certain ;
For thy complexion shifts to strange effects,
After the moon."

is also found in the *Apologie*, near the last extract quoted from it :

". . . . If we should ever continue one and the same, how is it then that now we rejoyce at one thing, and now at another? For it is not likely that without alteration we should take other passions, and what admitteth alterations continueth not the same; and if it be not one selfe same, then it is not: but rather with being all one, the simple being doth also change, ever becoming other from other." (*Florio*, II, xii, p. 310.)

After two considerations which we need not consider because of their triteness, the Duke adds one which the same objection would keep us from noticing if it had not a parallel close to the last three :

"Thou hast nor youth nor age,
But as it were an after-dinner's sleep,
Dreaming on both; for all thy blessed youth
Becomes as aged, and doth beg the alms
Of palsied eld; and when thou art old and rich,
Thou hast neither heat, affection, limb, nor beauty,
To make thy riches pleasant."

The similar passage in the *Apologie* reads as follows :

". . . . "Our reason and soule, receiving the phantasies and opinions, which sleeping seize on them, and authorizing our dreames actions with like approbation, as it doth the daies, why make we not a doubt whether our thinking and our working be another dreaming, and our waking some kind of sleeping?" (*Florio*, II, xii, p. 306.)

Shakespeare's application of the idea to youth and age dreaming of each other, of course, leaves Montaigne's thought at a tangent; but taking into consideration the grouping of all

these parallels, the likeness is at least suggestive. For the Duke's last argument :

"Yet in this life
Lie hid moe thousand deaths : yet death we fear,
That makes these odds all even,"

there is within the same few pages a more convincing parallel. It was pointed out by Mr. Robertson :¹

"And then we doe foolishly feare a kind of death, whenas we have already past and dayly passe to many others; . . . The flower of age dieth, fadeth and fleeteth, when age comes upon us, and youth endeth in the flower of a full growne mans age : childhood in youth and the first age dieth in infancie ; and yesterday endeth in this day, and to day shall die in to morrow, And nothing remaineth or ever continueth in one state. (*Florio*, II, XII, p. 309.)

Within this one speech, then, we have found eight passages that have parallels, more or less close, in the *Essays*. Six of them are in one essay, the seventh is only a few pages after it, and the other is found in an essay in which we have already found five parallels to passages in the plays. Moreover, of the eight extracts from Montaigne, five were within a space of ten pages, and three within a space of three pages.

Besides the grouping of the passages from either writer, and the striking likeness of uncommon ideas shown by certain of the parallels, there is another argument in favor of a real indebtedness of some kind on the part of Shakespeare, in regard to which this set of parallels affords us sufficient data to make its consideration opportune. The differences exhibited by each pair of parallel passages have certain constant tendencies. That in nearly every case the version of Shakespeare is shorter, a glance back at the quotations is sufficient to show ; if incisions had not been made in several of the passages from the *Essays*, their greater length would be even more apparent. That Shakespeare's version is more easily understood, must have been apparent as the pas-

¹ *Montaigne and Shakspeare*, pp. 53 f.

sages were compared. That in a still more constant and striking way Shakespeare's manner of expressing the common ideas is more concrete, figurative, pictorial, will appear if we read with our eyes open for concrete expressions a few lines of the Duke's speech :

"A *breath* thou art, *servile* to all the *skye* influences
That dost this *habitation* where thou *keep'st*
Hourly affect. Merely thou art *death's* fool
For him thou *labour'st* by thy *flight* to *shun*
And yet *runn'st* towards him still."

Not one of all these concrete and figurative expressions is found in the *Essays*. The rest of the speech shows frequent signs of the same concreteness. These three tendencies, toward greater brevity, toward greater clearness, and toward greater concreteness, the passages for which we had previously found parallels in Montaigne also exhibit in varying degrees. One instance of the greater brevity, for instance, is this :

"My bones would rest,
That have but laboured to attain this hour ;"

and an illustration of the greater concreteness is found in the passage where, instead of Montaigne's "difference between beast and beast," Shakespeare puts the difference not merely between dog and dog, but between "hounds and grey hounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs, Shoughs, water-rugs and demi-wolves." These same tendencies, though they will not always be pointed out, may easily be remarked in many of the cases of resemblance still to be presented. The frequency with which the tendencies are manifested, and the fact that they are in the direction of qualities characteristic of all Shakespeare's work, make it possible to consider them as elements of the impress given by the mind of Shakespeare to ideas which in some sense he appropriated.

Keeping in mind these tendencies of difference, let us return to the discussion of parallels relating to the insignificance of man. There is in the *Apologie* still another passage pointing

out a human disadvantage, which Shakespeare may be thought to have borrowed. It reads as follows :

" Exclaiming that man is the only forsaken and out-cast creature, naked on the bare earth, fast bound and swathed, having nothing to cover and arm himself withall but the spoile of others; whereas Nature hath clad and mantled all other creatures, some with shels, some with huskes, with rindes, with haire, with *wooll*, with stings, with bristles, with *hides*, with mosse, with feathers, with skales, with fleeces, and with *silke*, according as their quality might need or their condition require." (*Florio*, II, XII, p. 228.)

With this compare the speech of the mad Lear on seeing Poor Tom :

" Is man no more than this ? Consider him well. Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha ! Here's three on's are sophisticated. Thou art the thing itself; unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings ! Come, unbotton here." (*King Lear*, III, 4, 105 ff.)

Another passage in the pessimistic *Apologie* has been suggested by Mr. Feis as the source for a part of the soliloquy "To be or not to be." For the sake of definiteness, the lines referred to, well-known as they are, will be quoted here :

"To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause.
. Who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscovered country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?"

(*Hamlet*, III, 1, 60 ff.)

This speech was long ago said by John Sterling to resemble

"much of Montaigne's writing." The passage adduced by Mr. Feis¹ as its specific origin, is as follows :

"I know I have neither frequented nor knowne death, *nor have I seen any body that hath either felt or tried her qualities to instruct me in them.* Those who feare her presuppose to know; as for me, I neither know who or what she is, nor what they doe in the other world. Death may peradventure be a thing indifferent, happily a thing desirable. Yet it is to bee believed that if it be a transmigration from one place to another there is some amendment in going to live with so many worthy famous persons that are deceased, and be exempted from having any more to doe with wicked and corrupt judges. If it be a *consummation* of one's being, it is also an amendment and entrance into a long and quiet night. Wee finde nothing so sweete in life as a quiet rest and *gentle sleepe, and without dreames.*" (*Florio*, III, XII, p. 540.)

Whether the expressions I have italicized show enough likeness to certain well known phrases of Hamlet's speech to have afforded the starting point for the similar or contradictory ideas there expressed, is made somewhat more doubtful by the fact that the traveller to the undiscovered country may well have been suggested by this passage in Marlowe's *Edward II*:

"Weep not for Mortimer
That scorns the world, and, as a traveller,
Goes to discover countries yet unknown." ²

(*Edward II*, V, 6.)

In favor of the hypothesis that Shakespeare took his ideas from the passage in the *Essays*, there is, first, the agreement between Hamlet and Florio in three ideas and in one uncommon word; and, secondly, an associated case of resemblance, pointed out by Mr. Robertson.³ Only two or three pages before the passage just quoted Montaigne, speaking, however, of "tedious and irksome imaginations," writes as follows :

"Yet I sometimes suffer my selfe by starts to be surprised with the pinchings of these unpleasant conceits, which whilst I arm my selfe to expell or wrestle against them assaile and beate mee. Loe here another huddle or tide of mischiefe that upon the neck of the former came rushing upon mee." (*Florio*, III, XII, p. 537.)

¹ *Shakspeare and Montaigne*, pp. 87 ff.

² See Robertson, *Montaigne and Shakspeare*, p. 49.

³ *Montaigne and Shakspeare*, pp. 45 ff.

May not a reminiscence of this passage be responsible for the mixed metaphor in "take arms against a sea of troubles?" The association of the two passages in the plays and of the two corresponding passages in the *Essays*, adds greatly, as in so many other cases, to the convincingness of each. For these two lines of this soliloquy, moreover,

"And makes us rather bear those ills we know
Than fly to others that we know not of,"

there is in another essay this parallel :

"The oldest and best known evill is ever more tolerable then a fresh and unexperienced mischiefe." (*Florio*, III, ix, pp. 489 f.)

Finally, there is further on in Hamlet's speech, as we shall see later, a passage expressing a thought very common in the *Essays*. Before we turn for the moment from this speech, it is well to notice that since the word "consummation" is Florio's translation for the dissimilar *anéantissement*, and "huddle or tide" his translation for the abstract *rengrègement*, Shakespeare would again be following the English version.

The convincingness of the final parallel dealing with human life in its more objective and philosophical aspects must, like that of many of the others, be weighed by the individual judgment. It will be remembered that among the passages from the *Apologie* quoted in connection with the Duke's speech in *Measure for Measure*, there was one which seriously considered the possibility that waking life was only another kind of dream. Let us keep this in mind while we read two more passages from the same essay :

"For wherefore doe we from that instant take a title of being, which is but a twinkling in the infinit course of an eternall night, and so short an interruption of our perpetuall and naturall condition? Death possessing what ever is before and behind this moment, and also a good part of this moment." (*Florio*, II, xii, p. 267.)

"Every humane nature is ever in the middle betweene being borne and dying; giving nothing of it selfe but an obscure apparance and shadow, and an uncertaine and weake opinion." (*Florio*, II, xii, p. 309.)

When we take these passages in connection with the one just referred to, we must be forcibly reminded of the words of Prospero :

" We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

(*Tempest*, IV, 1, 158 ff.)

Even more than by the world of nature or by man in his relations with it, Montaigne's tireless curiosity was attracted by the mysterious workings of the human mind. That he might furnish data as to the one mental experience he knew well, was, according to one of his less fanciful explanations, the reason why in the *Essays* he said so much about himself. Certainly such things as the untrustworthiness of the senses, the tyranny of custom and habit over opinion, the diversity and inconsistency of our ideas about right and wrong, the inconstancy and mixed nature of our feelings, the relation between the reason and the will,—those questions which now-a-days we include in psychology as distinguished from philosophy,—such puzzling matters Montaigne in his rambling chat discussed again and again. In all he says upon these problems there is shown the same unconventionality and indeterminateness by which we have seen manifested, in other fields of thought, his characteristically sceptical nature. He questions everything, and that with shrewdness ; but far from deciding anything, he delights rather in emphasizing inconsistency and uncertainty.

One or two of these psychological ideas we have already encountered in our discussion of the Duke's speech in *Measure for Measure*. Besides these, there are passages expressing several similar thoughts for which there is some reason to consider Shakespeare indebted to Montaigne. Two of these cases have to do with the distinction between right and wrong. We often find in reading the *Essays* such passages as the following :

" When I religiously confesse my selfe unto my selfe, I finde the best good I have hath some vicious taint Man is all in all but a botching and party coloured worke." (*Florio*, II, xx, p. 345.)

The thought here is that of a passage in *All's Well that Ends Well*:

"The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together: our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipped them not; and our crimes would despair, if they were not cherished by our virtues." (*All's Well that Ends Well*, IV, 3, 83 ff.)

That the resemblances here are great enough to prove that Shakespeare is following this particular passage, we may not assert. That Montaigne's idea, so frequently expressed in the *Essays*, did perhaps give him his suggestion, another coincidence between passages dealing with a similar theme may help us to conclude. There is, for example, for Mariana's pleading for Angelo in *Measure for Measure*,

"They say, best men are moulded out of faults;
And, for the most, because much more the better
For being a little bad,"—

(*Measure for Measure*, V, I, 444 ff.)

this most suggestive parallel; which, by the way, makes Shakespeare's meaning far more easily understood:

"Now that it be not more glorious, by an undaunted and divine resolution, to hinder the growth of temptations, and for a man to frame himself to vertue, so that the verie seeds of vice be cleane rooted out; than by mayne force to hinder their progresse; and having suffered himselfe to be surprised by the first assaults of passions, to arme and bandie himselfe to stay their course and to suppress them; And that this second effect be not also much fairer than to be simply stored with a facile and gentle nature and of it selfe distasted and in dislike with licentiousnesse and vice, I am persuaded there is no doubt. For this third and last manner seemeth in some sort to make a man innocent, but not vertuous: free from doing ill, but not sufficiently apt to doe well." (*Florio*, II, XI, p. 213.)

Another question that Montaigne likes to dabble in is the importance of the imagination in modifying our experiences. Mr. Elze,¹ only to decide against the hypothesis of indebtedness, but followed more confidently by several other investigators, suggested a case of resemblance between passages ex-

¹ *Essays on Shakespeare*, 1872, p. 7.

pressing such an idea. It is between Hamlet's words to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern :

"Why, then, 'tis none to you ; for there is no thing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so," (*Hamlet*, II, 2, 249 ff.)

and the following passage in the *Essays* :

"If that which we call evill and torment, be neither torment nor evill, but that our fancie only gives it that qualitie, it is in us to change it." (*Florio*, I, XL, p. 117.)

The same idea Shakespeare has put into the mouth of Troilus :

"What is aught but as 'tis valued?"

(*Troilus and Cressida*, II, 2, 52.)

There is in the essay just quoted a passage upon a kindred subject which Shakespeare seems also to have used. Montaigne has been discussing the pain of death. He then says of pain in general :

"It may easily be seen, that the point of our spirit is that which sharpeneth both paine and pleasure in us. Beasts wanting the same leave their free and naturall senses unto their bodies : and by consequence single well-nigh in every kind, as they shew by the semblable application of their movings." (*Florio*, I, XL, p. 121.)

These same ideas in a phrasing which, as usual, is shorter and more concrete, are found in a passage from *Measure for Measure*, a play in which we have already found several parallels :

"The sense of death is most in apprehension ;
And the poor beetle, that we tread upon,
In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great
As when a giant dies."

(*Measure for Measure*, III, I, 78 ff.)

Another subject of a similar kind, about which Montaigne often speaks, is the power of habit. He says, for example :

"Both which ["custome and use"] have power to enure and fashion us, not onely to what forme they please (therefore, say the wise, ought we to be addressed to the best, and it will immediately seem easie unto us) but also to change and variation." (*Florio*, III, XIII, p. 556.)¹

¹See *Montaigne and Shakspeare*, pp. 24 f, for similar passages suggested by Mr. Robertson as affording the suggestion for the lines quoted from *Hamlet*.

Now this thought is neither abstruse nor new ; yet, considering the number of parallels, it is interesting to notice that Montaigne's idea is just the one that Shakespeare has expressed in the following well-known passage :

" Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery,
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: the next more easy ;
For use can almost change the stamp of nature,
And either . . . the devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency."

(*Hamlet*, III, 4, 160 ff.)

In connection with this parallel concerning habit we may notice another on a question distantly connected with it,—namely, fashion. Montaigne has concerning this subject the following passage :

" . . . Then began he to condemne the former fashion [when a new one came in] as fond intolerable and deformed ; and to commend the latter as comely, handsome, and commendable. . . . you would say, ' it is some kind of madness or selfe-fond humor that giddieth his understanding ! ' " (*Florio*, I, xvix, p. 147.)

This association of giddiness with the changes of fashion Shakespeare has expressed in the following fantastically literal way :

" Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is ? how giddily a'turns about all the hot bloods between fourteen and five-and-thirty ? sometimes fashioning them like Pharaoh's soldiers in the reechy painting, sometimes like god Bel's priests in the old Church window." (*Much Ado about Nothing*, III, 3, 138 ff.)

We may notice in passing that the word " deformed," common to the two passages, is, in Florio, the translation of *inepte*.

Another problem of the same psychological nature which Montaigne has discussed, is the transitory and paradoxical nature of emotion. Here are several sentences from his essay, *We taste nothing purely* :

"Our exceeding voluptuousnesse hath some aire of groning and wailing. Would you not say it dieth of anguish? . . . Excessive joy hath more severity than jolity. . . . Travail and pleasure, most unlike in nature, are notwithstanding followed together by a kind of I wot not what natural conjunction. . . . And the extreamity of laughing entermingles it selfe with teares." (*Florio*, II, xx, p. 344).

These sentences express the idea found in the following lines from Hamlet :

"There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it;
And nothing is at a like goodness still;
For goodness, growing to a pluriſy,
Dies in his own too much :"

(*Hamlet*, IV, 7, 115 ff.)

A psychological problem which perhaps attracted Montaigne even more than any of those already considered, partly on account of his own peculiar temperament, was the relation of the reason and the will. It is naturally Hamlet whose words furnish us with most of the coincidences upon this subject, for in him there was the same conflict as in Montaigne, only far more intense. This similarity of nature between Hamlet and Montaigne was apparent to Sterling¹ years ago; and, as we have seen, has been made by Herr Stedefeld and Mr. Feis the basis of elaborate and conflicting theories. Sometimes both Montaigne and Hamlet uphold the reason as man's guide. For example, Montaigne writes :

"Since it has pleased God to endow us with some capacitie of discourse, that as beasts we should not servily be subjected to common laws, but rather with judgement and voluntary wisdom apply ourselves unto them; we ought somewhat to yield to the simple auctoritie of Nature, but not suffer her tyrannically to carry us away : only reason ought to have the conduct of our inclinations;" (*Florio*, II, viii, p. 192.)

and Hamlet has the following lines :

"What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.

¹ *Westminster Review*, vol. 29, p. 321.

Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,
 Looking before and after, gave us not
 That capability and god-like reason
 To fust in us unused."

(*Hamlet*, IV, 4, 33 ff.)

For this passage Mr. Robertson¹ has suggested the parallel in the *Essays*; but only tentatively, as one among other possible sources. In his speech in praise of Horatio, Hamlet extols at length the same ideal of the judgment as man's sovereign director. Here are his words:

"For thou hast been
 As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
 A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
 Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are those
 Whose blood and judgement are so well commingled,
 That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
 To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
 That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
 In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
 As I do thee."

(*Hamlet*, III, 2, 70 ff.)

"Passion's slave" is especially suggestive of Montaigne. One of the numerous passages in which he uses similar expressions is the following:

"It is not to be the friend (lesse the master) but the slave of ones selfe to follow uncessantly, and bee so addicted to his inclinations, as he cannot stray from them, nor wrest them."² (*Florio*, III, III, p. 416.)

Sometimes, on the other hand, Montaigne and Hamlet agree in going to the other extreme, and praising rashness. Mr. Henry Morley has pointed out a striking coincidence on this subject.³ Hamlet, in relating how he exchanged the fatal letters, speaks as follows:

"Rashly,
 And praised be rashness for it, let us know,
 Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
 When our deep plots do pall: and that should teach us
 There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
 Rough-hew them how we will."

(*Hamlet*, V, 2, 6 ff.)

¹ *Montaigne and Shakspere*, p. 35.

² See also II, xvii, p. 338.

³ In preface to Routledge *Florio*.

The parallel which Mr. Henry Morley pointed out for this passage is as follows :

"My consultation doth somewhat roughly hew the matter, and by its first shew, lightly consider the same : the maine and chiefe point of the worke I am wont to resigne to heaven." (*Florio*, III, VIII, p. 476.)

It is interesting to note that there is nothing in the French corresponding to the striking common figure, "rough hew ;" so that here, again, Shakespeare must have been using Florio's translation.

A third idea which is expressed by both Montaigne and Hamlet refers to the way in which too much balancing of reasons interferes with action. Here are a few of the sentences in which Montaigne has treated the subject :

" . . . For the use of life and service of publike society there may be excesse in the purity and perspicuity of our spirits. This piercing brightnes hath overmuch subtilty and curiositie. . . . Affaires need not be sifted so nicely and so profoundly. A man looseth himselfe about the considerations of so many contrary lustres and diverse formes. . . . Whosoever searcheth all the circumstances and embraceth all the consequences thereof hindereth his election." (*Florio*, II, xx, p. 345.)

Hamlet's similar statements are well known. There is the passage from the famous soliloquy :

"Thus conscience does make cowards of us all ;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pitch and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action" ;
(*Hamlet*, III, I, 83 ff.)

and there is his even more unmistakeable outbreak on seeing the army of Fortinbras :

" . . . Some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event,
A thought which, quartered, hath but one part wisdom
And ever three parts coward." (*Hamlet*, IV, 4, 40 ff.)

In *Troilus and Cressida*, by the way, there is another expression of the same idea :

“Nay, if we talk of reason,
 Let's shut our gates and sleep ; manhood and honour
 Should have hare-hearts, would they but fat their thoughts
 With this cramm'd reason : reason and respect
 Make livers pale and lustihood deject.”

(*Troilus and Cressida*, II, 2, 46 ff.)

One thought frequently expressed by Montaigne, both because it does not belong in any of those groups of his ideas which we have been considering, and because it is, perhaps, the most elevated of all his opinions, we may well consider as our final example of thoughts in the *Essays* that can be paralleled in Shakespeare. It is the conviction of the practical value of truthfulness ; expressed in the *Essays*, to take one example, in the following extract :

“Our intelligence being onely conducted by way of the word : whoso falsifieth the same betraieth publike society It is the only instrument by meanes whereof our wils and thoughts are communicated : it is the interpretour of our soules : If that faile us, we hold our selves no more, we enter-knowe one another no longer. If it deceive us, it breaketh al our commerce, and dissolveth al bonds of our policie.” (*Florio*, II, xviii, 341.)

In *Measure for Measure*, from which we have so often quoted before, we find the same idea :

“There is scarce truth enough alive to make societies secure.”

(*Measure for Measure*, III, 2, 239 ff.)

We have now finished the consideration of the parallels between Shakespeare and Montaigne. That every one of the passages quoted from the *Essays* is the source of the corresponding passage from Shakespeare's plays it would be impossible to prove ; but that a majority of them (the list of probable cases varying with the individual reader) did really, at least through some reminiscence of their general trend, have a vital connection with Shakespeare's lines, several circumstances, some of which we have already briefly considered, combine to make probable. There is first of all the actual close correspondence of many of the parallels quoted. There is the number of parallels, each additional coincidence height-

ening the probability of indebtedness in an increasing ratio. There is the grouping of the parallels in the same essay and in the same play, or more closely, in the same scene or speech, and in the same few pages ; and the grouping, by their dates of composition, of the plays containing the greatest number of parallels with the *Essays*, within a period of a few years. And, finally, there is the fact that the differences between the corresponding passages show tendencies that are both constant and explicable. To begin with, Shakespeare's manner of expressing the common ideas constantly differs from that of Montaigne, as we have already seen, in being briefer, clearer, and more concrete. Perhaps the best single instance where all three tendencies are shown is afforded by the famous lines in which Shakespeare unites the suggestions of two or three vague passages of the *Essays* :

" We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

(*Tempest*, IV, 1, 156 ff.)

Now these three qualities, brevity, clearness, and concreteness, are characteristic of Shakespeare's style in general and therefore to be expected in his expression of ideas suggested by another. A fourth and even more constant class of differences consists of those necessitated by the transfer from essay to drama. For one thing, slight changes are demanded, even in that passage in the *Tempest* which is taken almost literally from Montaigne's *Of the Canibales*, by the fact that Shakespeare is writing in metre. The new circumstances and the new context often occasion more noticeable differences. Montaigne indulges in philosophical speculations about what comes after death ; Hamlet debates whether or not he shall commit suicide : and so the common ideas must be worded differently. Again, because Shakespeare's characters are far from having minds "with Mediterranean tides," as some one aptly describes Montaigne's, their expression of the ideas of the *Essays* is colored both by their habitual feelings and prejudices, and by the mood of the moment. In the case just

spoken of, Montaigne's placid wonder contrasts with Hamlet's fear of

" what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil."

To Montaigne, again, it is only a pleasant intellectual exercise to represent man as "a miserable creature naked on the bare earth;" with Lear the thought that man is a "poor bare forked animal" intensifies his raving. To sum up, differences between the parallel passages which consist of a greater brevity, clearness, and concreteness in Shakespeare's version, combined with an adaptation to the new context and to the new speaker, form no objection to the theory of indebtedness on the part of Shakespeare in the case in question. If, then, we consider the striking likeness of many of the parallels cited, the number and the grouping of these passages, and the constant tendencies observable in those points in which they differ, we are justified in accepting a large proportion of them as cases in which Shakespeare is in some sort indebted to Montaigne.

We are accordingly at last ready to consider the important question as to what was the nature of this indebtedness. In deciding this question, the fact that Shakespeare has put into the mouths of his characters thoughts appropriated from the *Essays*, cannot be held to be conclusive. The opinions he ascribes to Hamlet, to Troilus, or to Rodrigo, can be considered his own with no more certainty than can their feelings or their crimes. To this kind of argument it may seem that the critics long ago applied the *reductio ad absurdum*. Yet it is still so frequently used, that perhaps the question needs discussion here. Some of the appropriated ideas, we have seen, were not originally Montaigne's, but were ideas he had himself reproduced from his classic masters; so that if in restating them Shakespeare is a disciple, he at least is not the disciple of Montaigne. Furthermore, we have seen that some of these ideas are introduced in the plays just where for dramatic purposes Shakespeare needed to express the classical point of view; so that the supposition that he consciously or

unconsciously appropriated fit means to his end, seems in such cases more probable than any theory of discipleship. In general, moreover, the purely dramatic character of each remark is in many cases brought out by the fact that some other character, often in the very next speech, takes a different, and sometimes an opposite, point of view. When Rodrigo has expressed Montaigne's idea in the speech ending "Then have we a prescription to die when death is our physician," Iago exclaims, "Drown thyself! drown cats and blind puppies!" And as Gonzalo, in the description of the ideal commonwealth which has been so long known to be borrowed from the *Essays*, speaks the words, "No sovereignty," the sailors break in with "Yet he would be king on't." Sometimes, too, the ideas borrowed from Montaigne are put into the mouths of characters under the influence of madness or of passion. Surely we would not ascribe to Shakespeare agreement with the speech of Lear when he is mad, or with that of Marianna when she is making her desperate petition for Angelo. Another reason that tells in this same direction, is that these characters do not themselves always believe their borrowed remarks. Gonzalo evidently talks of his ideal state simply to distract the king from worrying about Ferdinand; he says himself that his words are "merry fooling." We might question, too, how much the Duke in *Measure for Measure* really believed of his long speech to Claudio on the evils of human existence. The Duke knew that Claudio's life was not in danger, since he, as duke, could interfere at any time to save him; but in his friar's disguise he must, under the circumstances, give voice to a few moral observations. These may be sincere; or they may be entirely perfunctory. If we thus refuse to believe that certain of the appropriated ideas were adopted by Shakespeare as his own, we must refuse to accept as his opinions, on such testimony alone, any of them whatever.

Plainly, then, the fact that Shakespeare's characters express some of Montaigne's ideas, is no proof that Shakespeare himself accepted them; still less does it imply that with them he

received the contagion of Montaigne's habits of thought. In order to come to a conclusion about the matter we must attack the problem in another way. All that has ever been established about Shakespeare's personal opinions, has been learned by observing the tendency of his plays as a whole, and by so making sure what things were true of the world as it appeared to him. Now, a comprehensive view of the *Tempest*, showing as it does that the license of the drunken sailors and the monstrosity of the savage Caliban had a part in Shakespeare's conception of the world, is the best proof that he was not dazzled by Montaigne's picture of an uncivilized society. Studying in this way the whole body of plays, we come to see that for Shakespeare most of the great questions of life were, as Professor Dowden says, "stupendous mysteries." If at first his attitude would seem to resemble that of Montaigne, a little comparison shows us that this is not the case. Montaigne's habit is to make a little hypothesis and then to balance it with another little hypothesis; Shakespeare's habit is resolutely and constantly to face the unknown. Montaigne treated the mysteries of the universe, for all he may say to the contrary, as matters upon which he could feed his curiosity and exercise his clever intellect; Shakespeare regarded them with awe. Montaigne wished only a chance to be forever guessing and never finding anything out; Shakespeare was resigned to a necessary ignorance.

In regard to one question we do feel sure that Shakespeare had a definite opinion: he believed that right and wrong are eternally distinguished from each other, and that in a sense far more fundamental than any chatter about "poetic justice," the following of the right is justified. Now Montaigne was far from believing this. Indeed, it is inconsistent with his Pyrrhonic philosophy and with all his sceptical habits of mind, to hold so definite an opinion on any subject whatever. That Shakespeare did hold this belief is another reason to prove that he was no disciple of Montaigne's.

We must accordingly accept the other hypothesis, and con-

sider that Shakespeare used the *Essays* as a mere store-house of material. Whether or not he knew how many suggestions he derived from it, must of course remain uncertain. In either case, the manifold nature of its subjects, the fresh, interesting, and popular quality of its ideas, and especially the ever-varying character of its author, all made it well adapted to the needs of the dramatist; and whether or not he was conscious of the fact, he put it to good service. He found it most suggestive in that part of his life during which he wrote *Hamlet* and *Measure for Measure*; but he continued to draw upon it for material to the end. What Shakespeare took, however, he transformed. He found expressions of opinion that were keen, indeed, and new, but vague, diffuse, and formless; he transformed them into poetry.

ELIZABETH ROBBINS HOOKER.

APPENDIX A.

THE VERSION OF MONTAIGNE'S ESSAYS USED BY SHAKESPEARE.

In order to be prepared to decide whether Shakespeare read Montaigne's *Essays* in the original French or in the translation of Florio, let us collect all the parallels where there is a difference between the two versions of such a nature that we can be sure Shakespeare followed one rather than the other. One such case Mr. Henry Morley has pointed out in the *Routledge* edition of Florio. He has there¹ shown that "No occupation, all men idle, all"² in the *Tempest* represents Florio's ambiguous translation, i. e., "No occupation but idle" of the French "*Nulles occupations qu' oysives*." A second instance of such conclusive difference occurs in

¹ See *Routledge* edition of *Florio*, glossary, under "idle."

² *Tempest*, II, 1, 155.

the new parallel which Mr. Morley points out in the preface of the same edition. In

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will,"¹

the figure "rough-hew" is derived from the "roughly hew the matter" of Florio,² not from the vague "*esbauche un peu la matiere*" of the original. Thirdly, "Thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls"³ follows Florio's "Which I could not well conceive, or that was beyond my reach,"⁴ rather than the dissimilar French expression "*Quelque aultre conte ou je ne puisse pas mordre.*" Fourthly, "take arms against a sea of troubles"⁵ resembles Florio's "another huddle or tide of mischief,"⁶ not Montaigne's "*Voicy un aultre rengregement de mal qui m'arriva à la suite du reste.*" Fifthly, the expression, "'Tis a consummation Devoutly to be wished"⁷ has the word "consummation," used, by the way, only three times by Shakespeare, in common with Florio's "If it be a consummation of one's being ;"⁸ whereas the French word so translated is *aneantisement*. Sixthly, the expression "deformed thief"⁹ in the passage on fashion in *Much Ado About Nothing* may have been suggested in part by the final adjective in Florio's "Then began he to condemne the former fashion as fond, intolerable, and deformed :"¹⁰ but could not have come from the corresponding French "*Il se moque de son aultre usage, le treuve inepte et insupportable.*" In all these cases Shakespeare is clearly following Florio rather than the French. The only case where Shakespeare's version resembles the French rather than Florio's translation is in that passage in *Julius Cæsar* where Florio's carelessly inserted 'no' in his translation of "*n'y a-t-il pas plus de mal,*" as "There is no more inconvenience," Shakespeare may quite conceivably have simply

¹ *Hamlet*, V, 2, 10 f.

² *Hamlet*, I, 4, 56.

³ *Hamlet*, III, 1, 59.

⁴ *Hamlet*, III, 1, 63 f.

⁵ *Much Ado About Nothing*, III, 3, 147.

² *Florio*, IV, VIII, p. 476.

⁴ *Florio*, I, XXVI, p. 81.

⁶ *Florio*, III, XII, p. 537.

⁸ *Florio*, III, XII, p. 540.

¹⁰ *Florio*, I, XLIX, p. 147

overlooked. This instance, then, affords no argument on either side; so that all the actual evidence would lead us to believe that the version Shakespeare used was the translation of Florio.

It may be objected, however, that that translation was not published till 1603; and that, nevertheless, of the passages having parallels in the *Essays* a number occur in a mutilated form in the first Quarto of *Hamlet*, published in that same year; others in *Julius Cæsar*, written not later than 1601; and still others in *Much Ado About Nothing*, probably written before 1600. These, it might appear, must have been suggested by the French version. But the soliloquy in which occur the "sea of troubles" and the "consummation devoutly to be wished," both of which, we saw, come from Florio rather than from the French, is found in a garbled form in the first quarto of *Hamlet*; and the passage in which, in partial agreement with Florio, fashion is called a "deformed thief" is found in *Much Ado About Nothing*. We are therefore led to conclude that the translation of Florio, like so many other works of that day, was circulated in manuscript; and that Shakespeare read it in that form. We know that some translation of Montaigne's *Essays* was so circulated; for Sir William Cornwallis in his *Essayes*,¹ published in 1600, but itself previously circulated in manuscript, writes as follows:

"For profitable Recreation, that Noble French Knight, the Lord *de Montaigne* is most excellent, whom though I haue not bene so much beholding to the French as to see in his Originall, yet diuers of his peeces I have seen translated: they that understand both languages say very well done, and I am able to say (if you will take the word of Ignorance) translated into a stile, admitting as few Idle words as our language will endure: It is well fitted in this newe garment, and *Montaigne* speaks now good English: It is done by a fellowe lesse beholding to nature for his fortune then witte, yet lesser for his face then fortune; the truth is hee looks more like a good-fellowe then a wise-man, and yet hee is wise beyond either his fortune or education." (*Essay 12, Of Censuring.*)²

¹*Essayes* by Sir William Corne-waleys, the younger, Knight. Printed by Edmund Mattes at the signe of the Hand and Plough in Fleet-street, 1600.

²See Dedication to the *Essayes*.

Two things implied in the extract about this manuscript translation we need to notice: first, Cornwallis speaks of it as if it were well advanced and generally esteemed; it is probably, then, no other than Florio's, the one actually published a few years later. Secondly, Cornwallis gives of its author such a description as would only be written by a comparative stranger. Now Shakespeare and Florio cannot have been strangers, for they were both friends of Ben Jonson, both *protégés* of Lord Pembroke, and both well known men in London society. If Cornwallis could have access as a stranger to a translation which was so probably Florio's, it is less surprising that there exists, in plays written before 1603, evidence that Shakespeare had been reading Montaigne's *Essays* in Florio's translation.

APPENDIX B.

TABULATION OF PARALLEL PASSAGES IN MONTAIGNE'S ESSAYS AND SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS.

The order is that of the conjectural dates given for the plays in Professor Dowden's *Shakespeare Primer*. The references to Shakespeare are to the *Globe* edition; those to Montaigne, to the *Routledge* edition of Florio's translation.

MONTAIGNE.

SHAKESPEARE.

Much Ado About Nothing.

I, XLIX, p. 147, f.

" Then began he to condemn the former fashion [when a new one came in] as fond intolerable and deformed;¹ and to commend the latter as comely, handsome, and commendable" you would say, "it is some kind of madness or self-fond humor that giddieth his understanding."

III, 3, 138 ff.

"Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is? how giddily a' turns about all the hot bloods between fourteen and five-and-thirty? sometimes fashioning them like Pharaoh's soldiers in the reechy painting, sometime like god Bel's priests in the old church window."

¹ French version: "*Il se moque de son autre usage, le treuve inepte et insupportable.*"

MONTAIGNE.

SHAKESPEARE.

Much Ado About Nothing.

II, 12, p. 304.

" . . . The sense of feeling . . . which by the effect of the griefe or paine it brings to the body doth so often confound and re-enverse all these goodly Stoicall resolutions, and enforceth to cry out of the belly-ache him who hath with all his resolution established in his mind this doctrine, that the cholike, as every other sickness or paine, is a thing indifferent, wanting power to abate anything of soveraigne good or chiefe felicity, wherein the wise man is placed by his owne vertue."

V, 1, 35 ff.

"For there was never yet philosopher That could endure the tooth-ache patiently, However they have writ the style of gods And made a push at chance and sufferance."

Julius Cæsar.

I, xix, 33.

"Herein consists the true and soveraigne liberty, that affords us meanes wherewith to jeast and make a scorn of force and injustice, and to deride imprisonment, gives or fetters."

I, 3, 90 ff.

"Cassius from bondage will deliver Cassius : Therein, ye gods, you make the weak most strong ; Therein, ye gods, you tyrants do defeat : Nor stony tower, nor walls of beaten brass, Nor airless dungeon, nor strong links of iron, Can be retentive to the strength of spirit ; But life, being weary of these worldly bars, Never lacks power to dismiss itself. If I know this, know all the world besides, That part of tyranny that I do bear I can shake off at pleasure."

I, xiv, p. 33.

" . . . Since we are threatened by so many kinds of death, there is no more inconvenience to feare them all,¹ than to endure one: what mat-

II, 2, 32 ff.

"Cowards die many times before their deaths ; The valiant never taste of death but once."

¹ French "*n'y a-t-il pas plus de mal.*"

MONTAIGNE.

Julius Cæsar.

ter when it commeth, since it is unavoidable?"¹

I, XVIII, 26.

"But for as much as he [Solon] is a Philosopher, with whom the favours or disfavours of fortune, and good or ill lucke have no place, and are not regarded by him; and puisances and greatneses, and accidents of qualitie, are well-nigh indifferent."

I, XXXVIII, p. 110.

"Our death is not sufficient to make us afraid; let us also charge ourselves with that of our wives, of our children, and of our friends and people."

Ibid., p. 111.

"It sufficeth me, under fortunes favour, to prepare my selfe for her disfavour; and being at ease, as far as imagination may attaine unto, so represent the evill to come unto my selfe: Even as we enure our selves to Tilts and Tourneyes, and counterfeit warre in time of peace."

I, XIX, p. 35.

"Why fearest thou thy last day? He is no more guiltie, and conferreth no more to thy death, than any of the others. It is not the last step that causeth weariness: it only declares it. All daies march towards death, only the last comes to it."

¹ Compare North's *Life of Julius Cæsar*: "And when some of his friends did counsel him to have a guard for the safety of his person, and some also did offer themselves to serve him, he would never consent to it, but said: 'It was better to die once than always to be afraid of death.'"—*Shakespeare's Plutarch*, London, 1875, p. 92.

SHAKESPEARE.

Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,

It seems to me most strange that men should fear;

Seeing that death, a necessary end, Will come when it will come."

IV, 3, 146 ff.

"*Brutus.* O Cassius, I am sick of many griefs.

"*Cassius.* Of your philosophy you make no use,

If you give place to accidental evils:

"*Brutus.* No man bears sorrow better. Portia is dead."

IV, 3, 189 ff.

"*Brutus.* Why, farewell, Portia. We must die, Messala:

With meditating that she must die once

I have the patience to endure it now."

V, 5, 41 f.

"My bones would rest,
That have but labour'd to attain this hour."

MONTAIGNE.

SHAKESPEARE.

All's Well That Ends Well.

I, xxxi, p. 99.

"... a rabble of men that are ordinaire interpreters and controulers of Gods secret desseignes, presuming to finde out the causes of every accident, and to prie into the secrets of Gods divine will, the incomprehensible motives of his works."

II, xxxvii, p. 388.

"We need not goe to cull out miracles, and chuse strange difficulties: mee seemeth, that amongst those things we ordinarily see there are such incomprehensible rarities as they exceed all difficultie of miracles."

II, xx, p. 345.

"When I religiously confesse my selfe unto my selfe, I finde the best good I have hath some vicious taint Man is all in all but a botching and party coloured worke."

II, 3, 1 ff.

"They say miracles are past; and we have our philosophical persons, to make modern and familiar, things supernatural and causeless. Hence is it that we make trifles of terrors, ensconcing ourselves into seeming knowledge, when we should submit ourselves to an unknown fear."

IV, 3, 81 ff.

"The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together: our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipped them not; and our crimes would despair, if they were not cherished by our virtues."

Hamlet.

I, xxvi, p. 81.

"So was I sometimes wont to doe, and if I heard anybody speake, either of ghosts walking, of foretelling future things, of enchantments, of witchcrafts, or any other thing reported, which I could not well conceive, or that was beyond my reach Reason hath taught me, that so resolutely to condemne a thing for false and impossible, is to assume unto himselfe the advantage, to have the bounds and limits of Gods will, and of the power of our common mother Nature tied to his

I, 4, 51 ff.

"What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature
So horridly to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?"

I, 5, 166 f.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,

MONTAIGNE.

sleeve. And that there is no greater folly in the world than to reduce them to the measure of our capacities and bounds of our sufficiency. If we term those things monsters or miracles to which our reason cannot attain, how many such do daily present themselves unto our sight?"

I, XL, p. 117.

"If that which we call evil and torment, be neither torment nor evil, but that our fancy only gives it that quality, it is in us to change it."¹

III, XII, p. 537.

"... Yet I sometimes suffer myself by starts to be surprised with the pinchings of these unpleasant conceits, which whilst I arme myself to expell or wrestle against them assaile and beate mee. Loe here another huddle or tide of mischief, that on the necke of the former came rushing upon mee."

Ibid., p. 540.

"I know I have neither frequented nor knowne death, nor have I seen any body that hath either felt or tried her qualities to instruct me in them. Those who feare her presuppose to know; as for me, I neither know who or what she is, nor what they do in the other world. Death may peradventure be a thing indifferent, happily a

SHAKESPEARE.

Hamlet.

Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

II, 2, 249 ff.

"*Hamlet.* Denmark's a prison.

...
Rosencrantz. We think not so, my lord.

Hamlet. Why, then, 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison."

III, 1, 56 ff.

"To be or not to be; that is the question

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer

The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,

Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,

And, by opposing, end them?

To die: to sleep:

No more; and by a sleep to say we end

The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks

That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation

Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;

¹Suggested tentatively by Elze: *Essays on Shakespeare*, 1872, p. 7; and later, positively, by Mr. Feis: *Shakespeare and Montaigne*, p. 81.

MONTAIGNE.

Hamlet.

thing desirable. Yet it is to be believed that if it bee a transmigration from one place to another, there is some amendment in going to live with so many worthy famous persons that are deceased, and be exempted from having any more to doe with wicked and corrupt judges. If it be a consummation of ones being, it is also an amendment and entrance into a long and quiet night. Wee finde nothing so sweete in life as a quiet rest and gentle sleepe, and without dreames."¹

II, ix, p. 489 f.

" . . . The oldest and best known evill is ever more tolerable then a fresh and unexperienced mischief."

II, xx, p. 345.

" . . . For the use of life and service of publike society there may be excesse in the purity and perspicuity of our spirits. This piercing brightnes hath overmuch subtilty and curiositie. . . . Affaires need not be sifted so nicely and so profoundly. A man looseth himselfe about the considerations of so many contrary lustres and diverse formes. . . . Whosoever searcheth all the circumstances and embraceth all the consequences thereof hindereth his election."

SHAKESPEARE.

To sleep: perchance to dream: ay,
there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what
dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause.
. Who would fardels bear
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something
after death,
The undiscover'd country from
whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the
will
And makes us rather bear those ills
we have
Than fly to others that we know not
of?

Thus conscience does make cowards
of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sickled o'er with the pale cast of
thought,
And enterprises of great pitch and
moment
With this regard their currents turn
awry,
And lose the name of action."

¹ Pointed out by Mr. Feis: *Shakspeare and Montaigne*, p. 87 ff. Compare, however, the following lines from Marlowe's *Edward II*; cited by Mr. Robertson, *Montaigne and Shakspeare*, p. 49:

"Weep not for Mortimer
Who scorns the world, and as a traveller,
Goes to discover countries yet unknown."

Edward II, V, last scene.

MONTAIGNE.

I, xviii, p. 26.

"But forsomuch as he [Solon] is a Philosopher, with whom the favours or disfavours of fortune, and good or ill lucke have no place, and are not regarded by him; and puissances and greatneses, and accidents of qualitie, are well-nigh indifferent."

III, iii, p. 416.

"It is not to be the friend (lesse the master) but the slave of ones selfe to follow uncessantly, and bee so addicted to his inclinations, as hee cannot stay from them, nor wrest them."¹

III, xiii, p. 556.

"Both which ["custome and use"] have power to enure and fashion us, not onely to what forme they please —(therefore, say the wise, ought we to be addressed to the best, and it will immediately seeme easie unto us) but also to change and variation."

SHAKESPEARE.

Hamlet.

III, 2, 70 ff.

" . . . For thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers
nothing,
A man that fortune's buffets and
rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and
blest are those
Whose blood and judgment are so
well commingled,
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please.
Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I
will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart
of heart,
As I do thee."

III, 4, 160 ff.

"Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense
doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and
good
He likewise gives a frock or livery,
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-
night,
And that shall lend a kind of
easiness
To the next abstinence; the next
more easy;
For use can almost change the stamp
of nature,
And either . . . the devil, or throw
him out
With wondrous potency."

¹ See also II, xiii, p. 338.

MONTAIGNE.

II, viii, p. 192.

"Since it hath pleased God to endow us with some capacitie of discourse, that as beasts we should not servily be subjected to common lawes, but rather with judgement and voluntary liberty apply ourselves unto them; we ought somewhat to yeeld unto the simple auctoritie of Nature, but not suffer her tyrannically to carry us away: only reason ought to have the conduct of our inclinations."¹

II, xx, p. 345.

"... For the use of life and service of publike society there may be excesse in the purity and perspicuity of our spirits. This piercing brightnes hath overmuch subtilty and curiositie. . . . Affaires need not be sifted so nicely and profoundly. A man looseth himselfe about the considerations of so many contrary lustres and diverse forms. . . . Whosoever searcheth all the circumstances and embraceth all the consequences thereof hindereth his election."

II, xx, p. 344.

"Our exceeding voluptuousnesse hath some aire of groning and wailing. Would you not say it dieth of anguish? . . . Excessive joy hath more severity then jolity. . . . Travail and pleasure, most unlike in nature, are notwithstanding followed together by a kind of I wot not what natural conjunction. . . . And the extremitie of laughing entermingles it selfe with teares."

SHAKESPEARE.

Hamlet.

IV, 3, 33 ff.

"What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his
time
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast,
no more.
Sure, he that made us with such
large discourse,
Locking before and after, gave us not
That capability and god-like reason
To fust in us unused."

"Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven
scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the
event,
A thought which, quartered, hath
but one part wisdom
And ever three parts coward, I do
not know
Why yet I live to say 'This thing's
to do;'
Sith I have cause and will and
strength and means
To do't."

IV, 7, 115 ff.

"There lives within the very flame
of love
A kind of wick or snuff that will
abate it;
And nothing is at a like goodness
still;
For goodness, growing to a plurisy
Dies in his own too much: that we
would do,
We should do when we would; for
this 'would' changes."

¹ Quoted as one of three possible sources by Mr. Robertson: *Montaigne and Shakspeare*, p. 35.

MONTAIGNE.

III, VIII, p. 476.

"My consultation doth somewhat roughly hew the matter, and by its first shew, lightly consider the same: the maine and chiefe point of the work I am wont to resigne to heaven."¹

I, XIX, p. 34.

"Moreover, no man dies before his houre. The time you leave behinde was no more yours than that which was before your birth, and concerneth you no more. . . . Wheresoever your life ended, there is it all. . . . It consists not in number of yeeres, but in your will, that you have lived long enough."²

Measure for Measure.

II, XII, p. 225.

"Is it possible to imagine anything so ridiculous as this miserable and wretched creature, which is not so much as master of himselfe, exposed and subject to offences of all things, and yet dareth call himselfe Master and Emperour of this Universe?"

SHAKESPEARE.

Hamlet.

V, 2, 4 ff.

"*Hamlet.* Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep:
methought I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,
And praised be rashness for it, let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall; and that should teach us
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."

V, 2, 230 ff.

"Not a whit, we defy augury: there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all: since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes?"

II, 2, 117 ff.

"But man, proud man,
Dressed in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he's most assured,
His glassy essence, like an angry ape,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
As make the angels weep."

¹ Pointed out by Mr. Henry Morley, 1885. See preface to Routledge *Florio*, p. viii.

² Pointed out by Mr. Feis: *Shakspeare and Montaigne*, p. 11.

MONTAIGNE.

*Measure for Measure.**Ibid.*, p. 225.

"To consider the power of domination these bodies have not onely upon our lives and condition of our fortune. . . . But also over our dispositions and inclinations, our discourses and wils, which they rule, provoke, and move at the pleasure of their influences, as our reason finds and teacheth us. . . . Seeing that not a man alone, nor a king, only, but monarchies and empires; yea, and all the world below is moved at the shaking of one of the least heavenly motions. . . . We, who have no commerce but of obedience with them?"¹

I, xix, p. 28.

"The end of our carriere is death, it is the necessarie object of our aime: if it affright us, how is it possible we should step one foot further without an ague?"²

p. 35. "To what end recoile you from it, if you cannot goe backe."

Ibid., p. 290.

" . . . No eminent or glorious vertue can be without some immoderate and irregular agitation. May not this be one of the reasons which moved the Epicureans to discharge God of all care and thought of our affaires: forsomuch as the very effects of his goodnesse cannot exercise themselves towards us without disturbing his rest by meanes of the passions which are as motives and solicitations directing the soule to vertuous actions?"

SHAKESPEARE.

III, I, 5 ff.

"Reason thus with life:
If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing
That none but fools would keep: a
 breath thou art,
Servile to all the skyey influences,
That dost this habitation, where thou
 keep'st,
Hourly afflict:

merely, thou art death's

fool;
For him thou labor'st by thy flight
 to shun
And yet runn'st toward him still.

Thou art not noble;
For all the accommodations that
 thou bear'st
Are nurst by baseness.

¹ Pointed out by Mr. Robertson: *Montaigne and Shakspeare*, p. 26.

² Pointed out by Mr. Robertson: *Montaigne and Shakspeare*, p. 53.

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*Measure for Measure.**Ibid.*, p. 308.

"Is it our senses that lend these diverse conditions into subjects, when for all that the subjects have but one? as we see in the Bread we eat: it is but Bread, but one using it, it maketh bones, blood, flesh, haire, and nailes thereof."

II, XIV, p. 315.

"Our appetite doth contemne and passe over what he hath in his free choice and owne possession, to runne after and pursue what he hath not."

II, XII, p. 210.

" . . . If we should ever continue one and the same, how is it then that now we rejoyce at one thing, and now at another? . . . For it is not likely that without alteration we should take other passions, and what admitteth alterations, continueth not the same; and if it be not one selfe same then it is not, but rather with being all one, the simple being doth also change, ever becoming other from other."

Ibid., p. 306.

"Those which have compared our life unto a dreame, have happily had more reason so to doe then they were aware. When we dreame, our soule liveth, worketh, and exerciseth all her faculties, even and as much as when it waketh . . . Our waking is never so vigilant as it may clearely purge and dissipate the ravings or idle phantasies which are the dreames of the waking, and worse then dreames. Our reason and soule, receiving the phantasies and

. Thou art not thyself;
For thou exist'st on many a thousand grains
That issue out of dust.

Happy thou art not;
For what thou hast not, still thou
strivest to get,
And what thou hast, forget'st.

Thou art not certain;
For thy complexion shifts to strange
effects,
After the moon.

. . . . Thou hast nor youth nor age,
But, as it were, an after dinner's
sleep,
Dreaming on both; for all thy
blessed youth
Becomes as aged, and doth beg the
alms
Of palsied eld; and when thou art
old and rich,
Thou hast neither heat, affection,
limb, nor beauty,
To make thy riches pleasant. What's
yet in this

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opinions, which sleeping seize on them, and authorizing our dreames actions, with like approbation, as it doth the daies, why make we not a doubt whether our thinking and our working be another dreaning, and our waking some kind of sleeping?"

That bears the name of life?

Ibid., p. 309.

"And then we doe foolishly feare a kind of death, whenas we have already past and dayly passe to many others; . . . The flower of age dieth, fadeth and fleeteth, when age comes upon us, and youth endeth in the flower of a full growne mans age: child-hood in youth and the first age dieth in infancie: and yesterday endeth in this day, and to day shall die in to morrow, And nothing remaineth or ever continueth in one state."¹

Yet in this life
Lie hid moe thousand deaths: yet
death we fear,
That makes these odds all even."

I, XI, p. 120 f.

" . . . Well, suppose that in death we especially regard the pain. . . . It may easily be seen, that the point of our spirit is that which sharpeneth both paine and pleasure in us. Beasts wanting the same leave their free and naturall senses unto their bodies: and by consequence single well-nigh in every kind, as they shew by the semblable application of their movings."

III, 1, 77 ff.

"Darest thou die?
The sense of death is most in apprehension;
And the poor beetle, that we tread upon,
In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great
As when a giant dies."

II, XVIII, p. 341.

"Our intelligence being onely conducted by way of the word: whoso falsifieth the same betraieth publike society. It is the only instrument

III, 2, 239 ff.

"There is scarce truth enough alive to make societies secure."

¹ Pointed out by Mr. Robertson: *Montaigne and Shakspeare*, p. 53.

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by meanes whereof our wils and thoughts are communicated: it is the interpretour of our soules: If that faile us, we hold our selves no more, we enter-know one another no longer. If it deceive us, it breaketh al our commerce, and dissolveth al bonds of our policie."

II, xi, p. 213.

"Now that it be not more glorious, by an undaunted and divine resolution, to hinder the growth of temptations, and for a man to frame himselfe to vertue, so that the verie seeds of vice be cleane rooted out; than by mayne force to hinder their progresse; and having suffred himselfe to be surprised by the first assaults of passions, to arme and bandie himselfe to stay their course and to suppress them; And that this second effect be not also much fairer than to be simply stored with a facile and gentle nature, and of it selfe distasted and in dislike with licentiousnesse and vice, I am perswaded there is no doubt. For this third and last manner seemeth in some sort to make a man innocent, but not vertuous; free from doing ill, but not sufficiently apt to doe well."

V, 1, 444 ff.

"They say, best men are moulded out of faults;
And, for the most, become much more the better
For being a little bad."

Troilus and Cressida.

II, xx, p. 345.

". . . . For the use of life and service of publike society there may be excesse in the purity and perspicuity of our spirits. This piercing brightnes hath over much subtilty and curiositie. . . . Affaires need not be sifted so nicely and so pro-

II, 2, 46 ff.

"Nay, if we talk of reason,
Let's shut our gates and sleep: man-
hood and honour
Should have hare-hearts, would they
but fat their thoughts
With this cramm'd reason: reason
and respect

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Troilus and Cressida.

foundly. A man looseth himselfe about the consideration of so many contrary lustres and diverse formes. . . . Whosoever searcheth all the circumstances and embraceth all the consequences thereof hindereth his election."

I, XL, p. 117.

"If that which we call evill and torment, be neither torment nor evill, but that our fancie only gives it that qualitie, it is in us to change it."

p. 119. "All doth not consist in imagination."

II, 3, p. 174.

"The common course of curing any infirmitie is ever directed at the charge of life: we have incisions made into us, we are cauterized, we have limbes cut and mangled, we are let blood, we are dieted. Goe we but one step further, we need no more physicke, we are perfectly whole. Why is not our jugular or throat-veine as much at our command as the mediane? To extreme sicknesses, extreme remedies. . . . God giveth us sufficient privilege, when he placeth us in such an estate, as life is worse than death unto us."

SHAKESPEARE.

Make livers pale and lustihood deject."

II, 2, 52.

"*Troilus.* What is aught, but as 'tis valued?

Hector. But value dwells not in particular will;
It holds his estimate and dignity
As well wherein 'tis precious of itself
As in the prizer: 'tis mad idolatry
To make the service greater than the god;
And the will dotes that is attributive
To what infectiously itself affects,
Without some image of the affected merit."

Othello.

I, 3, 309 ff.

"*Rodrigo.* It is silliness to live when to live is torment; and then have we a prescription to die when death is our physician.

.
Iago. Drown thyself! drown cats and blind puppies!"

MONTAIGNE.

SHAKESPEARE.

King Lear.

II, XII, p. 228.

" . . . Exclaiming that man is the onely forsaken and out-cast creature, naked on the bare earth, fast bound and swathed, having nothing to cover and arme himself withall but the spoile of others; whereas Nature hath clad and mantled all other creatures, some with shels, some with huskes, with rindes, with haire, with wooll, with stings, with bristles, with hides, with mosse, with feathers, with skales, with fleeces, and with silke, according as their quality might need or their condition require."

p. 229. "Such complaints are false."

I, XIX, p. 33.

"But nature compels us to it. Depart (saith she) out of this world, even as you came into it. The same way you came from death to life, returne without passion or amazement, from life to death. . . ."

p. 34. "It consisteth not in number of yeares, but in your will, that you have lived long enough."

I, XXXI, p. 99.

" . . . A rable of men that are ordinarie interpreters and controulers of Gods secret designs, presuming to find out the causes of every accident, and to prie into the secrets of Gods divine will, the incomprehensible motives of his works."¹

III, 4, 107 ff.

"Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! here's three on's are sophisticated! Thou art the thing itself: unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings! come, unbutton here."

V, 2, 9 ff.

"Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their
coming hither:
Ripeness is all."

V, 3, 16 f.

"And take upon 's the mystery of
things,
As if we were God's spies."

¹ Pointed out by Mr. Robertson: *Montaigne and Shakspeare*, p. 66.

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Macbeth.

I, XLII, p. 128.

"Plutarke¹ saith in some place that he findes no such great difference betweene beast and beast, as he findeth diversitie between man and man."

III, 1, 92 ff.

"Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men;
As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves are clept
All by the name of dogs: the valued file
Distinguishes the swift, the slow,
the subtle,
The housekeeper, the hunter, every one
According to the gift which beauteous nature
Hath in him closed, whereby he does receive
Particular addition, from the bill
That writes them all alike: and so of men."

II, III, p. 174.

"The common course of curing any infirmitie is ever directed at the charge of life: Goe we but one step further, we need no more physicke, we are perfectly whole. To extreme sicknesses, extreme remedies. . . . God giveth us sufficient privilege, when he placeth in such an estate, as life is worse than death unto us."

V, 4, 6 ff.

". Be cured
By the sure physician, death, who is the key
To unbar these locks."

I, XIX, p. 33.

"Herein [in freedom from fear of death] consists the true and soveraigne liberty, that affords us meanes wherewith to jeast and make a scorne of force and injustice, and to deride imprisonment, gives, or fetters."

¹ In *That Beasts have the use of Reason*. This was not, of course, included in the North's *Plutarch's Lives* which Shakespeare knew.

MONTAIGNE.

The Tempest.

I, xxx, p. 94.

"It is a nation, would I answer Plato, that hath no kinde of traffike, no knowledge of Letters, no intelligence of numbers, no name of magistrate, nor of politike superioritie; no use of service, of riches or of povertie; no contracts, no successions, no partitions, no occupation but idle; no respect of kindred, but common, no apparell but naturall, no manuring of lands, no use of wine, corne, or mettle."¹

Shortly before this passage comes this:

" . . . Me seemeth that what in those nations we see by experience, doth exceed all the pictures where-with licentious Poesie hath proudly imbellished the golden age."

II, xii, p. 267.

"For wherefore doe we from that instant take a title of being, which is but a twinkling in the infinit course of an eternall night, and so short an interruption of our perpetuall and natural condition? Death possessing whatever is before and behind this moment, and also a good part of this moment."

p. 309. " . . . Every humane nature is ever in the middle betweene being borne and dying; giving nothing of it selfe but an obscure apparance and shadow, and an uncertaine and weake opinion."

SHAKESPEARE.

II, 1, 147 ff.

"I' the commonwealth I would by contraries
Execute all things; for no kind of traffic
Would I admit; no name of magistrate;
Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,
And use of service, none; contract, succession,
Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard none;
No use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil;
No occupation: all men idle, all;
And women too, but innocent and pure;
No sovereignty;—

I would with such perfection govern,
sir,
To excel the golden age."

IV, 1, 156 ff.

"We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

¹ Pointed out by Capell: *Notes and Various Readings*, 1671, Pt. III, vol. II, p. 63.